



JENNIFER GRANHOLM  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY, ARTS AND LIBRARIES  
LANSING

DR. WILLIAM ANDERSON  
DIRECTOR

MEMORANDUM

TO: Michigan Court Officials  
FROM: Debra Gearhart, Director  
DATE: March 16, 2006  
SUBJECT: Michigan's Local Government Records are in Danger!

Everyday, Michigan citizens use the records managed by more than 2,300 units of local government. As hurricane Katrina continues to demonstrate, when you lose local government records, buying and selling land, solving criminal cases, receiving health care and financial assistance, and fulfilling the basic administrative, fiscal and legal functions of government becomes very difficult.

The Michigan Local Government Records Management Task Force conducted a survey in July 2004 of local government officials to analyze whether local governments need records management assistance from the state of Michigan, and the possible ways to meet that need. Over 500 local officials responded to the survey. Among other issues, fewer than 1/3 of those responding said that their records had adequate protection, and less than 1/2 had enough storage space.

The findings and recommendations of the task force were published in a report titled, "Michigan's Local Government Records are in Danger!" This report is available online at <http://www.michigan.gov/recordsmanagement/>.

The report outlines strategies for developing comprehensive Retention and Disposal Schedules, expanding educational efforts, promoting cost-effective storage, and preserving records with permanent value.

We hope you will take some time to review this report and share it with other interested parties. Please feel free to contact the Records Management Services at (517) 335-9132 if you have any questions. Thank you.